(d) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO): (a) Government have seen the press reports but have not confirmed information in this regard.

(b) Astore and Gilgit exist in northern Pak-occupied Kashmir area but the existence of a place called Killantown is not known.

(c) and (d) Government do not have any reliable information to suggest that there has been increased in the Chinese troop strength across the Ladkh border or that additional posts have been established by them in the Kailash ranges.

Permission to foreign Banks to enter into Loaning Business

1468. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether permission has been granted to some foreign banks to enter into business jointly with large business groups; and

(b) what regulations are being formulated by Government to ensure orderly business?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY): (a) and (b) As per the information furnished by Reserve Bank of India no permission has been granted to any foreign banks to undertake or conduct the business of loaning or making commercial advances jointly by Indian business groups.

Purchase of High Grade Virginia tobacco by the tobacco Board

1469. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Tobacco Board has turned down the suggestion of the Government of Andhra Pradesh to purchase high grade virginia tobocco from the the growers; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SUPPLY (SHRI NIHAR RANJAN LASKAR): (a) and (b) The suggestion made by the Government of Andhra Pradesh for purchases of 1984 virginia tobacco crop by Tobacco Board has been looked into. Most of the tobacco with the growers has already been disposed by them. It is, therefore, not considered necessary for any Government Agency to intervene in the market.

Abolition of Sales tax and Octroi on Handlooms

1470. SHRI SHANKER SINH VAGHELA:
PROF B. RAMACHANDRA RAO:
MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have recently issued any directive to the State Governments for the abolition of Sales Tax and Octroi on handloom products;

(b) if so, which States have implemented the said directive; and

(c) whether Government propose to abolish Sales Tax on some other items also; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) Central Government have requested the State Governments to consider abolition of sales-tax and octroi on handloom products.

(b) The States of Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Tripura and the Union Territories of Goa, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Heveli and Lakshadweep Islands have informed that they have already exempted handloom goods from sales-tax and octroi duty. Other State Governments are considering the suggestion made by the Central Government.